

CAREX GEYERI: REVISITED

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In this journal over 35 years ago, R. T. Clausen and H. A. Wahl (1939) first reported the occurrence of *Carex geyeri* Boott (a typically Rocky Mountain sedge ranging from British Columbia and Alberta to Colorado, Utah, and northern California) in the Eastern United States. This site:

By limestone outcroppings, in dry deciduous woods on bluffs and slopes on west side of Spring Creek near west boundary of grounds of State Penitentiary, Rock, north of Lemont, Centre Co. [Pennsylvania]

apparently still represents the only known locality for this species east of Colorado.

With the assistance of Dr. Wahl, I was able to relocate *Carex geyeri* in May, 1975. The area has remained undisturbed and, except for sapling growth, mostly unchanged. Clumps of *C. geyeri* were observed in 3 distinct areas along a quarter mile stretch of the bluff and have been seen at various times in similar habitats slightly downstream (Wahl, personal communication). These clumps showed a full range of vigor: fully half were setting fruit, others had aborted fruit (perhaps due to lack of proper pollination?), while several clumps were only persisting vegetatively.

The bicentric distribution of this sedge may have arisen either through introduction by man in recent years or by some more natural means. Hermann (1970) favors the first hypothesis, but Clausen and Wahl made definite note of the natural undisturbed aspect of the habitat. Furthermore, it should be noted that the nearest major travel routes, i.e., railroads, highways, or waterways, are at least several miles away thereby making introduction by man unlikely. Since other East-West disjuncts are known (see

Wood, 1970, for a full discussion) and considering the relatively sizable area these plants cover, the localized, distinctive nature of the habitat, and the period of time over which *C. geyeri* has been known for this site (first discovered in 1932), I believe that the occurrence of this sedge in central Pennsylvania represents a relict disjunct of phytogeographical importance.

LITERATURE CITED

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